

A Biblical Perspective on Movement in the Bible

More than a sociological perspective on movement, we need to see where movement is anchored in the Scriptures. Beginning in the Old Testament and moving into the New Testament, we will explore the symmetry between blessing and increase, especially as they pertain to a church planting movement.

Dietrich Schindler (D.Min) is a German-American missionary church planter who is currently the Europe-wide Church Planting consultant for the Evangelical Free Church of Germany (Bund Freier evangelischer Gemeinden). Under his leadership the denomination is striving to plant 100 new churches in Germany in ten years. After seven years 65 churches have been planted. He has himself planted five churches in Germany and has written and lectured on what it would take to see a church planting multiplication movement to take root in Germany and in Europe. He is the author of *The Jesus Model: Planting Churches like Jesus*. Dietrich has been married to Jan Carla for thirty-two years, and they have three adult children. He has also generated a new life-based course for secular post-modern Europeans entitled “MyLife-Workshop” (www.mylifeworkshop.org)

I. Theological Basis for Multiplication

A. Word Field “Increase”

Multiplication as Theocratic Blessing

Multiplication Blessing in Genesis:

METAPHOR	OBJECT	REFERENCE
Teeming with living creatures	Aquatic animals	Gen 1:20
Fill the water in the seas	Aquatic animals	Gen 1:22
Fill the earth	Adam & Eve	Gen 1:28
Fill the earth	Noah	Gen 9:1, 7
All the peoples on earth	Abraham	Gen 12:3
Like the dust of the earth	Abraham	Gen 13:16
Stars in the heavens	Abraham	Gen 15:5
Many nations	Abraham	Gen 17:5
Greatly increase in number	Ishmael	Gen 17:20
Stars in the sky	Abraham	Gen 22:17
Sand on the seashore	Abraham	Gen 22:17
Hundred-fold harvest	Isaac	Gen 26:12
Like the sand of the sea	Jacob	Gen 32:12
Community of nations	Jacob	Gen 35:11
Fruitful vine	Joseph	Gen 49:22

Summary: God’s gracious gift of extending human effort beyond human means

1. *salah* – To make prosperous, bring success (Gen 24:21, 40, 42, 56)

2. *barak* – To bless (Gen 12: 1-3; 24:1, 27, 31)
3. *sheres* – To fill (Gen 1:20; Ex 1:6-7)

B. Jesus and Multiplication

Multiplication as Christological expectation

1. The chain of covenantal blessing from Abraham, to David, to Peter (Mt 16:17-18)
2. Jesus is the new dynastic David (Acts 2:24-25), coregent with the Father
3. High-yield results (Mt 13:1-9; Mk 4:1-9; Lk 8:4-8)

C. Characteristics of multiplication according to Jesus:

1. Axiomatic (Mk 4:26-29)
2. Powerful (that same power to save (Ro 1:16) is the power to multiply)
3. On-going greater works (Jn 14:12)
4. More and better (Jn 15:8, 16)

D. Multiplication in the Early Church - Multiplication as pneumatic activity

The book of Acts presents both emphases and practices, not necessarily as alternatives but as ideals. Twice the word *added* appears immediately following Pentecost in Acts 2:41 and 47. Luke mentions it again in 5:14 and 11:24. This concept seems to indicate an enlargement of the local group and increasing it in size and number. However, the word *multiplied* soon follows and is used in Acts 6:1, 7; 9:31; 12:24. It is recorded that disciples multiplied, churches multiplied, and that the word of God grew and multiplied. The concept of multiplication seems to point in the direction of an increasing number of groups and churches rather than an expansion of existing ones. Thus both practices prevailed in apostolic times.” (George Peters)

II. General Principles of multiplication derived from the Scriptures

A. Multiplication begins with God, not with man

- B. Multiplication is fuelled by an astounding vision
- C. Multiplication presumes human inadequacy
- D. Multiplication is the activity of the Holy Spirit
- E. Multiplication is rooted in worship and prayer
- F. Multiplication flows from fear of the Lord
- G. Multiplication feeds on the dissemination of the Gospel
- H. Multiplication varies in speed

III. Eight personal principles of multiplication in the life of the church planter

- A. The successful church planter will *cultivate personal holiness*.
- B. The successful church planter will *trust the power of Christ*.
- C. The successful church planter will *focus on the harvest*.
- D. The successful church planter will *proclaim the whole gospel*.
- E. The successful church planter *gives priority to relationships*.
- F. The successful church planter will *work through other people*.

G. The successful church planter will *expect and teach others to expect difficulties*.

H. The successful church planter will *employ wise strategies*.

IV. Conclusion